



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

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News Release

LEADER OF AUSTIN-BASED ALIEN-SMUGGLING ORGANIZATION SENTENCED TO 8 YEARS IN PRISON

AUSTIN, Texas — The leader of an Austin-based alien smuggling organization was sentenced today to 96 months in federal prison, announced U.S. Attorney Johnny Sutton, Western District of Texas, and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Special Agent-in-Charge Alonzo Pena.

Domingo Diaz-Resendez was sentenced to eight years as the alien smuggling leader. His accomplice, Orlando Mauricio Torres-Rojas, was sentenced to 33 months in federal prison for his role as a guide/driver in the alien smuggling organization. In addition to the prison terms, U.S. District Judge Lee Yeakel ordered that Diaz-Resendez and Torres-Rojas be placed under supervised release for three years after completing their prison terms

“Today’s sentencing sends a strong message that the government will not tolerate this type of criminal activity,” said Alonzo Pena, special agent-in-charge of the ICE San Antonio office. “Alien smugglers have a well-earned reputation for being ruthless and having no regard for human life. Our job in ICE is to investigate and compile evidence against them to put them behind bars.”

“Mr. Domingo Diaz-Resendez earned a lengthy stay in federal prison,” stated U.S. Attorney Johnny Sutton. “This prosecution should serve as notice to the *coyotes* of our commitment to arrest, prosecute and imprison those involved in alien smuggling.”

Diaz-Resendez pleaded guilty Sept. 7 to one count of conspiracy to smuggle, transport and harbor over 100 aliens. The plea also included one count of harboring illegal aliens and one count of money laundering. Torres-Rojas pleaded guilty on the same day to one count of conspiracy to smuggle, transport and harbor over 100 aliens, plus one count of harboring illegal aliens.

ICE agents arrested Diaz-Resendez, Torres-Rojas and Carlos Alfonso Montoya-Perez on April 23. At the time of arrest, the defendants had just transported at least 17 illegal aliens to a mobile home located at 7097(B) FM 973 in Travis County. The illegal aliens — from El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Mexico — informed authorities that they each paid between \$1,500 to 2,000 to be smuggled into the United States from Mexico near Eagle Pass or Laredo, Texas.

The investigation also revealed that Diaz-Resendez and others were on the receiving end of an estimated \$188,000 in wire transfers representing smuggling fees. The United States is currently seeking the forfeiture of these proceeds derived from the smuggling activity, including the property located at 503 Los Vista in Leander, Texas, and a monetary judgment of \$188,451.80.

Carlos Alfonso Montoya-Perez pleaded guilty to one count of harboring illegal aliens on Sept. 15. He is scheduled to be sentenced Dec. 1. He faces up to 10 years in federal prison.

Today, ICE agents continue to look for two fugitives that are part of the smuggling organization, Manuel Hernandez-Perez and Eliazar Guel-Perez.

This was an ICE-led investigation that was assisted by: the FBI, the Internal Revenue Service's Criminal Investigation Division, the Austin Police Department, and the Travis County Sheriff's Office.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Gerald C. Carruth is prosecuting this case on behalf of the Government.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of four integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.